

The Clean Water Act

The goal of the federal Clean Water Act is to protect the biological, physical, and chemical integrity of the Nation's aquatic resources. Water quality standards are established under the Clean Water Act to protect a variety of uses, including drinking and agricultural water supply and aquatic species habitat.

The State of California, through the State Water Resources Control Board and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards, has the lead role in water quality and aquatic resource protection under the federal Clean Water Act and the State's water quality statutes. California protects water quality through efforts such as establishing water quality standards, developing and implementing watershed improvement plans, issuing waste discharge permits, and providing financial and technical assistance. The State and Regional Water Boards' Strategic Workplan for Activities in the Bay Delta Estuary is available at: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/waterrights/water_issues/programs/bay_delta/.

EPA and five federal partners describe a variety of actions and investments to support a healthy and sustainable estuary in the Interim Federal Action Plan (Action Plan) for the California Bay-Delta. These collaborative efforts are focused on securing a high-quality, reliable water supply and restoring environmental integrity and sustainability to the estuarine ecosystem. As poor water quality contributes to the water supply and ecological crisis in the Delta, EPA committed in the Action Plan to assess the effectiveness of Clean Water Act programs in protecting water quality. The ANPR initiates this assessment by seeking public input on the effects of water quality stressors and approaches to better protect water quality in the Bay Delta Estuary.



The Bay Delta Estuary ANPR and associated materials are available at

www.epa.gov/region9/water/watershed/sfbay-delta

Comments and Response

EPA encourages interested parties to read the ANPR and provide additional information and suggestions for actions to improve Bay Delta Estuary water quality and aquatic resource protection. Comments can be submitted electronically at the *Federal Rulemaking Portal* (www.regulations.gov) identified by docket EPA-R09-OW-2010-0976 or in hardcopy addressed to Erin Foresman, US Environmental Protection Agency, 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA 94105.

EPA will use ANPR comments and existing information to assess the effectiveness of Clean Water Act programs in protecting water quality and the aquatic ecosystem in the Bay Delta Estuary. The evaluation will include recommendations for future actions that complement other activities in the Estuary. EPA will continue to coordinate our aquatic resource protection work under the Clean Water Act with our federal and state partners and their ongoing efforts such as the Bay Delta Conservation Plan, the activities of the State and Regional Water Boards and the Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Plan.